

COUNTY OF DARE, NORTH CAROLINA
REQUEST FOR LETTER OF INTEREST

THE COUNTY OF DARE DESIRES TO ENGAGE A QUALIFIED PRIVATE
CONSULTING FIRM TO PROVIDE PLANNING AND DESIGN SERVICES FOR
WAYSHOWING ALONG THE OUTER BANKS NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY
STIP Number: S-5501

The Outer Banks National Scenic Byway traverses one of the nation's great coastal landscapes. One of the first scenic Byways designated by the State of North Carolina, the Byway was awarded national designation in October 2009.

The Byway follows NC 12 as it traverses Bodie and Hatteras islands in Dare County, Ocracoke Island in Hyde County and hooks up with U.S. 70 to travel through Down East in Carteret County.

The Byway's Advisory Committee applied for a Wayshowing grant from the National Scenic Byway Program. The grant application was based on a Wayshowing Assessment, dated Nov. 10, 2011. The Byway received the grant. The Wayshowing Assessment and national grant application are available on the Outer Banks Scenic Byway page at www.darenc.com.

The County of Dare serves as fiscal agent for the Outer Banks National Scenic Byway. The selected firm will contract with the County of Dare. The selected firm will work with Byway representatives in Dare, Hyde and Carteret counties as well as with North Carolina Department of Transportation and federal agencies.

The selected firm will develop a coordinated and comprehensive wayshowing system with design of byway route guide signs, signs to byway attractions and orientation stops at existing facilities; design a multi-media digital map; integrating new signage with state and federal agency signage; develop a printed resource document; conduct training for hospitality personnel; and prepare all bid documents and contracts for materials and labor that require competitive bidding. Design must be in accordance with the current edition of the ***Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*** and the N. C. Department of Transportation's ***Guidelines for Wayfinding Signs along State Maintained Roadways (for Motorists)***.

The selected firm shall have the appropriate skills and qualifications to ensure contract compliance. In the event the Prime Consultant is not an engineering firm, design work requiring engineering or engineering judgment must be subcontracted to a firm properly registered with the NC Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. The Engineers performing the work and in responsible charge of the work must be registered Professional Engineers in the State of North Carolina and must have a good ethical and professional standing. For firms subcontracted to perform engineering services, a statement verifying registration must be included in the Letter of Interest.

The selected firm shall indemnify and save harmless the County of Dare for claims and liabilities resulting from negligence, errors or omissions of the selected firm; including, but not limited to, the engineers, technicians or subconsultants. The firm must have the financial ability to undertake the work and assume the liability.

The selected firm will be required to furnish proof of Professional Liability coverage in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000. The firm must have an adequate accounting system to identify costs chargeable to the project.

The proposed method of payment for this contract is lump sum.

Selection of a firm for this specific project will be handled in accordance with the following process:

1. Submission by firms Letters of Interest (LOI).
2. Dare County in consultation with Byway representatives will short list firms to a minimum of three firms.
3. Pre-interview meeting and oral interview held at the option of County of Dare and the Byway.
4. County of Dare will select a firm to provide planning and design of comprehensive wayshowing system.

SMALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICE FIRM (SPSF) PARTICIPATION

The Department encourages the use of Small Professional Services Firms (SPSF). Small businesses determined to be eligible for participation in the SPSF program are those meeting size standards defined by Small Business Administration (SBA) regulations, 13 CFR Part 121 in Sector 54 under the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). The SPSF program is a race, ethnicity, and gender neutral program designed to increase the availability of contracting opportunities for small businesses on federal, state or locally funded contracts. SPSF participation is not contingent upon the funding source.

The selected firm, at the time the Letter of Interest is submitted, shall submit a listing of all known SPSF firms that will participate in the performance of the identified work. The participation shall be submitted on the NCDOT's Prime Form RS-2 and/or Subconsultant Form RS-2.

Form RS-2 forms may be accessed on the NCDOT website at <https://apps.dot.state.nc.us/quickfind/forms/Default.aspx>.

The SPSF must be qualified with the Department to perform the work for which they are listed.

Real-time information about firms doing business with the NCDOT and firms that are SPSF certified through North Carolina's Unified Certification Program is available in the Directory of Transportation Firms. The Directory can be accessed by the link on the Department's homepage or by entering <https://apps.dot.state.nc.us/vendor/directory/> in the address bar of your web browser.

The listing of an individual firm in the Department's directory shall not be construed as an endorsement of the firm.

PREQUALIFICATION

The Department maintains on file the qualifications and key personnel for each approved discipline, as well as any required samples of work. Each year on the anniversary date of the company, the firm shall renew their prequalified disciplines. If your firm has not renewed its

application as required by your anniversary date or if your firm is not currently prequalified, please submit an application to the Department prior to submittal of your letter of interest. An application may be accessed at <https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/Prequal/Pages/Private-Consulting-Firm.aspx>. Having this data on file with the Department eliminates the need to resubmit this data with each letter of interest.

Even though specific DBE/MBE/WBE goals are not required for this project, the Department of Transportation is committed to providing opportunity for small and disadvantaged businesses to perform on its contracts through established Department goals. The selected firm, subconsultant and subfirm shall not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, disability or sex in the performance of this contract.

EVALUATION

Firms submitting LOIs to develop a coordinated and comprehensive wayshowing system with design of byway route guide signs, signs to byway attractions and orientation stops at existing facilities will be evaluated based upon certain considerations. The following considerations, with the weighted importance, will be utilized to select a minimum of three firms from those submitting a Letter of Interest:

1. Firm's experience, knowledge, familiarity and past performance with wayshowing signage systems: 40%
2. Experience of the firm's proposed staff to perform the type of work required: 30%
3. Firm's understanding of the project specific issues and its responsibility in delivering services for the advertised project: 30%

North Carolina firms qualified to do the required work will be given priority consideration. A North Carolina firm is a firm that maintains an office in North Carolina staffed with an adequate number of employees judged by the Department to be capable of performing a majority of the work required.

After reviewing qualifications, if firms are equal on the evaluation review, then those qualified firms with proposed SPSF participation will be given priority consideration.

FORMAT FOR SUBMISSION OF A LETTER OF INTEREST TO THE COUNTY OF DARE

All letters of interest are limited to 10 pages (RS-2 forms are not included in the page count) inclusive of the cover sheet, and shall be typed on 8 1/2" x 11" sheets, single-spaced, one-sided. Fold out pages are not allowed. In order to reduce costs and to facilitate recycling; binders, dividers, tabs, etc. are prohibited. One staple in the upper left-hand corner is preferred. Letters of interest containing more than 10 pages will not be considered.

Section I - Cover/Introductory Letter

The introductory letter should be addressed to Susan Beck, Purchasing Agent, County of Dare, P.O. Box 1000, Manteo, NC 27954. Said letter is limited to one (1) page and should contain the following elements of information:

- Expression of firm's interest in the work;
- Statement of whether firm is on register or submitting information with letter of interest;

- Date of most recent qualification;
- Statement regarding firms' possible conflict(s) of interest for the work; and
- Summation of information contained in the letter of interest.

Section II - Evaluation Factors

This section is limited to five (5) pages and should contain information regarding evaluation and other factors listed in the advertisement such as:

- A brief synopsis of the firm's previous wayshowing experience that is focused to the type of project advertised for services;
- The number of employees within the firm;
- A brief description of the firm's approach to performing wayshowing services, including the firm's understanding of its responsibility with regard to safety, environmental responsibility, claims, and project delivery;
- The proposed personnel to be assigned to the work by discipline, their availability date on the project.
- Identify project personnel/subconsultants' qualifications and experience as related to this work;
- Unique qualifications of key team members; and
- Any innovative approaches to be used.

Section III - Supportive Information

This section is limited to four (4) pages and should contain the following information:

- Capacity Chart/Graph (available work force);
- Organizational chart indicating personnel to be assigned by discipline;
- The resumes of key personnel who are proposed to be assigned to the work;
- Names, classifications, and location(s) of the firm's North Carolina employees and resources to be assigned to the advertised work, if any; and
- Other information.

Appendices -- CONSULTANT CERTIFICATION Form RS-2

Completed Form RS-2 forms **SHALL** be submitted with the firm's letter of interest.

This section is limited to the number of pages required to provide the requested information.

Submit Form RS-2 forms for the following:

- Prime Consultant firm (Prime Consultant Form RS-2 Rev 1/14/08), and;
- ANY/ALL subconsultant firms (Subconsultant Form RS-2 Rev 1/15/08) to be or anticipated to be utilized by your firm.

Complete and sign each Form RS-2 (instructions are listed on the form)

In the event the firm has no subconsultant, it is required that this be indicated on the Subconsultant Form RS-2 by entering the word "None" or the number "ZERO" and signing the form.

The required forms are available at: <https://apps.dot.state.nc.us/quickfind/forms/Default.aspx>.

SUBMISSION OF LETTER OF INTEREST

Private consulting firms are invited to have letters of interest for furnishing a comprehensive wayshowing system for the Outer Banks National Scenic Byway to the County of Dare by 2 p.m. on **Feb. 21, 2014**. **Letters of interest received after this deadline will not be considered.**

Firms submitting letters of interest are encouraged to carefully check them for conformance to the requirements stated above. If Letters of Interest do not meet all of these requirements, or are sent to any address other than shown below they will be disqualified. No exception will be granted.

The mailing address is: Susan Beck, Purchasing Agent, County of Dare, P.O. Box 1000, Manteo, NC 27954

The delivery address is: Susan Beck, Purchasing Agent, County of Dare, 954 Marshall C. Collins Drive, Manteo, NC 27954

Any questions concerning the advertisement should be directed to Susan Beck, Purchasing Agent, at the mailing address above or by e-mail to susanm@darenc.co or by telephone at (252) 475-5891.

If you feel information provided is inadequate to submit a letter of interest, contact Susan Beck via the above methods.

NOTIFICATION

The short-listed firms will be notified by **Feb. 28, 2014**. Notification will not be sent to firms not short-listed.

In the event Dare County elects to hold Oral Interviews, interviews will be scheduled soon after short-listed notification.

The firm selected will be notified by **March 18, 2014**. Notification will not be sent to firms not selected.

Dare County reserves the right to reject any and all Letters of Interest.